

(Washington, DC)— The House of Representatives today approved the final version of the Agriculture Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2010. Senator Herb Kohl and Congresswoman Gwen Moore (D-Wisc.) worked to include a waiver in the bill for Wisconsin to expand their Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). This waiver will increase the maximum age requirement and allow more teenagers to participate in the CACFP supper program.

“On-site meals are sometimes the only healthy meal a child can depend on, and the need for food doesn’t diminish in a child’s teen years, it grows,” Kohl said. “This waiver will give the most disadvantaged teenagers in our state access to a nutritious meal at the end of the day. We have seen the difference these meal programs can make in children’s abilities to learn and achieve.”

“When we talk about education reform, there are many programs we discuss to increase access to financial aid for our students and countless other initiatives that we need to implement to improve classroom outcomes,” Congresswoman Moore said. “But all of that overlooks the simple fact that if kids are not getting the proper nutrition, if they are going to bed hungry and waking up and going to school without food in their stomachs, they’re not able to concentrate on their homework and classroom activities. It’s not rocket science, but working to make sure children are getting the three nutritious meals that growing kids need every day can greatly increase their chances of success in the classroom.”

“With so many children in need it is more important than ever to find ways to provide three meals a day. Kids growing up in this economic climate face plenty of challenges, but now going to bed hungry doesn’t have to be one of them. Thanks to Senator Kohl for his leadership securing the supper waiver for school age children in our state,” offered Sherrie Tussler, executive director of Hunger Task Force.

This legislative modification would add Wisconsin to a list of states eligible under a pilot program to provide expanded supper benefits under the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to children ages 13 to 18. CACFP provides meals and snacks to about 3 million children nationwide per day. According to the Hunger Task Force, the waiver for Wisconsin will result in supper for 18,000 kids during the upcoming year.

The bill will now go back to the Senate chamber for final approval.

Video of Congresswoman Moore speaking on the floor about the provision is available here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JaTpgLQ7lhs>

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